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SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION: PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN
IRAQ

¶1. Summary: Kuwaiti Arabic-language press continued its coverage of the Iraqi parliamentary elections calling the election "a step towards unity and a better future for Iraq." Despite claims of possible fraud, the Kuwaiti press paid more attention to the fact that the elections were carried out in a relatively peaceful manner and that the participation levels were high across the religious and ethnic spectrum. Under the headline "Iraqis forgot their divisions for only one day," Al-Watan newspaper published a translation of Patrick Cockburn's commentary, "Iraq: The beginning of the end. The state created by Britain after the First World War may be passing away," that appeared on December 11 in the British daily "The Independent." End summary.

Selected Headlines

¶2. Saturday, December 17, 2005

-- Al-Qabas p. 3 "Elections bolster Iraqi unity"

-- Al-Qabas p. 47 "Unofficial results refuted by the commission and 70% participation: 'The coalition' leads in five Shiite governorates and 'Kurdistan' in the North"

-- Al-Rai Al-Aam p. 34 "The White House describes the Iraqi elections as 'a historic day'; 'More than 10 Million Iraqis participated in the elections and Zebari considers it to be the last nail in the dictatorship's coffin'; 'Canada praises the courage of Iraqis and their commitment to democratic change'; 'Anan expresses his comfort with the elections'; 'Straw: A great day that will lead to a better future'; 'Rafsanjani praises Iraq's victory'; 'International delegation: the elections were in compliance with international standards'

-- Al-Watan p. 2 "Shaykh Sabah congratulates Al-Jaafari on the elections: promoting Iraqi unity and reclaiming its constructive role"

-- Al-Watan p. 39 "The 'Coalition' and 'Kurdistan' assure their landslide in the South and North with major gains for Allawi's list"; "Al-Jaafari makes reference to giving Al-Sadr's supporters a political role and forming the next

government takes a shorter time"

-- Al-Watan p. 43 "Turkey and the Iraqi elections: Returning from the nets of the Islamic Party to face the two enemies: Shiites and Kurds"; "The elections bolstered the Iraqis' morale"

-- Al-Seyassah p. 33 "Landslide gain for the Shiite coalition with the beginning of the parliamentary vote counting"; "Rumsfeld considers the elections to be the first truly democratic Arab elections"; "Bush: Iraq is a model for Iran and Syria to follow"

-- Al-Anbaa p. 3 "The Prime Minister congratulated his Iraqi counterpart on the success of the elections"

-- Al-Anbaa p. 24 "Corruption and Iranian agents in Al-Jaafari's government Allawi wins with the votes of the ministers, MPs, officials, and employees in the Green Zone"

Block Quotes

13. Saturday, December 17, 2005

-- Abdul Zahra Al-Rekabi wrote for the moderate daily Al-Qabas under the title "Contents of the Current Stage": "The most recent news coming out of Iraq point to a dangerous turn of events that was predicted by Newsweek Magazine as the undeclared civil war taking place in Iraq becomes declared. The future of the current struggle and the future of Iraq are tied to the elections. Some of the articles of the Iraqi constitution promote divisions and the control of some of the country's vital resources such as water and oil

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wells by regional powers. The magazine received a copy of a secret UN report stating that the Iraqi constitution is

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exemplary of regional divisions of the country. That is why the post-elections period in Iraq will be one of the most dangerous the country has witnessed. That is because the threats that were previously limited to calls and theoretical demands will come into the realm of implementation and follow-up based on the constitution that was prepared by certain groups of Iraqis with America's blessings."

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